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## BETTER FIT FOR CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

Tailors and dressmakers do not ask customers how old they are. To insure well-fitting garments, they take body measurements at strategic points. If, similarly, the sizing of ready-made clothing for children were based on body measurements instead of age, they would fit better.

That, in effect, is what Miss Ruth O'Brien of the Federal Bureau of Home Economics told a conference called by the American Standards Association in New York City last month. To this group of pattern and garment manufacturers, retailers, and consumers, Miss O'Brien suggested a new basis for sizing children's clothing. Her recommendations were based on the findings of a recent Nation-wide survey, carried on under her direction, of the body measurements of 150,000 children, ages 4 to 17.

Less than a week after Miss O'Brien presented her report, a subcommittee, appointed by the conference to examine facts and figures of the survey, voted to recommend to the clothing trade that height and hip measure be used as future standards for classifying children's garments as to size.

The adoption by the trade of these two measurements as a basis for sizing would make it possible to buy clothes to fit children by simply giving the clerk two measurements -- ones that can be taken easily and accurately with a tapeline. This lengthwise and crosswise combination is a reliable indicator of a child's body build according to the analysis of the 36 measures taken of each 150,000 American children.



It is no secret that the present method of sizing garments is unsatisfactory. Customers constantly complain of inconvenience and time wasted in shopping. Retail merchants estimate that at least \$10,000,000 worth of children's clothing is returned each year because of wrong size or lack of standardization in the sizes of children's clothes.

As one step in the direction of better-fitting clothing, some manufacturers are now selling boys' trousers by waist and length of leg measurements rather than by age. But, until the survey of children the country over conducted in 1937 and 1938 by the Federal Bureau of Home Economics and financed by the Works Progress Administration, there have been no reliable figures to guide any scientific resizing of all clothing for children.

At the request of the American Home-Economics Association, the American Standards Association set machinery in motion to remedy the situation. The latter association serves both consumer and producer by getting interested groups together to discuss and work out American standards for various articles. The standards are then presented to the trade for adoption or rejection. This is the first time the association has given attention to standards for any type of clothing.

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